



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **ICE special agents arrest 6 suspected ‘coyotes’ in Northeast El Paso** *The Mexican nationals were among a group of 33 illegal aliens inside a house*

EL PASO, Texas - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents Thursday arrested six Mexican men suspected of harboring 27 illegal aliens inside a Northeast house here.

Among them is Israel Villegas-Feregrino, 24, a known alien smuggler and suspected member of a major international alien smuggling ring.

The others are: Carlos Vallinas-Bautista, 20; Juan Carlos Perez-Perez, 18; Rafael Chavez-Peña, 24; Margarito Wenceslao-Mesquite, 33, and Eduardo Benitez-Benitez, 19. All of the suspects are from the Mexican state of Hidalgo.

ICE special agents responded to 3807 Mountain Ave. after receiving information from the U.S. Border Patrol. All of the aliens being smuggled appeared to be in good health. However, they were dirty and were living in cramped quarters. It’s unknown at this time how long the aliens had been held inside the house.

“Human smuggling represents a serious threat to the security of the homeland and protection of our borders,” said Troy Henley, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in El Paso. “Our ICE special agents are continuing to aggressively investigate this criminal activity, and seek prosecution of these smuggling organizations.”

The investigation is continuing, and the suspects are scheduled to have a preliminary and bond hearing Sept. 20 in federal court.

#ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*